

# Amir of Afghanistan Makes a Sightseeing Tour Outside His Domain

**C**ALCUTTA, Jan. 23.—The amir of Afghanistan arrived in this city yesterday and immediately made it known that his visit was of a purely private character. Nevertheless, formal calls were exchanged between the amir and the viceroy, and then the amir settled down to a program of sightseeing.

That really is the end and aim of the journey, which is a remarkable one. The amir is a tourist, and as he is, for the first time in his life, outside the boundaries of his native country, he is informing himself and enjoying himself as only a traveler can who is under no necessity of considering the cost of pleasure or of anything else that interests him.

He left his capital, Kabul, late in December, and has been on the way ever since, pausing when and where he listed, making side excursions to see points of interest or to pray at famous shrines. For this private unofficial tour he surrounded himself with a retinue of no less than 1,500 persons, who are now quartered in this city.

It must be difficult for Americans to get an adequate conception of the amir either as a man or a ruler, for there is no country with which new world people come in direct or even diplomatic contact that offers any sort of analogy to Afghanistan and its civilization. There is civilization in Afghanistan; there are stone houses, splendid palaces, an extraordinary literature, which itself implies educational institutions, well organized government, laws, courts, army, police; but there is not one mile of railroad, and there are few other roads suitable for wheeled vehicles; and its monarch, a man of native intelligence and highly educated according to Afghan standards, has had his first ride in a railway train this month, his first ride in a motor car, and has had his eyes opened in many other respects to things which by mere force of familiarity we have come to regard as essential accompaniments of civilization.

Afghanistan is one of the few countries from which Great Britain had to retreat after gaining a foothold on the soil. Before the middle of the last century the Afghans drove out the British garrisons and their defenders with great slaughter. No serious attempt has been made to recover military control of the country, but what the British army failed to do has been accomplished so far as is necessary for British interests by diplomacy and money.

After much negotiation the late amir, father of the present ruler, agreed that Afghanistan should accept the advice of the British government in India on all questions relating to foreign affairs. This means in plain language that Afghanistan is dependent on Great Britain. It cannot make war with or enter treaty relations with any other government and cannot maintain agents or representatives in foreign capital.

So far as its domestic affairs are concerned, however, Afghanistan is as independent as the United States and the amir is its absolute ruler. He is in his own person the court of appeals for all kinds of cases and he can abrogate the laws or proclaim new ones without let or hindrance from Great Britain. There were two considerations which induced the late amir to deprive his country of individuality in the list of nations—the payment to him by the Indian government of \$600,000 annually and the guarantee by the British government that Afghanistan should be protected against unprovoked aggression.

The country covers an area about equal to that of the New England states, plus New York. Its population is estimated at nearly 5,000,000. The present amir was born in 1872 and succeeded to the throne in October, 1901.

He formally reaffirmed his father's treaty with Great Britain in 1905 and at that time announced that he would make a journey to India in 1907. His official designation is rather formidable to English-speaking eyes, but really not more so than the complete designation of other monarchs, the king of England, for example, to whom officially we must refer as "his most excellent majesty, Edward the Seventh, by the grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the British dominions beyond the seas, king, defender of the faith, emperor of India." The amir's designation is "his highness Sher-ul-mulk, wad-din Amir Habib Ullah Khan," which is comparatively modest in dimensions however grand its meaning may be. Since his accession he has also been made a grand commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.

The amir supports a considerable harem. It is not known how many concubines he has, but there are four regularly recognized wives, the chief of whom, known as the queen wife, enjoys an allowance of \$75,000 a year. The allowances of the other wives are \$50,000, \$150,000 and \$75,000, according to seniority.

There is also a queen mother in this complex family, and it is well known that the young monarch has a monkey and parrot time of it in maintaining domestic discipline. The queen wife, who was formerly a slave girl, and whose beauty infatuated Habib Ullah while he was yet a prince, is a descendant of the famous description.

She is also jealous and overbearing with cause enough, and has not viewed the accession of other wives with any degree of equanimity, but she cannot help herself, because the amir maintains, and the law justifies him, that his rank entitles him to at least four wives. So the queen wife takes it out on her attendants. She chatters then freely and frequently, and thus far has killed three of them with her own hand. Astonishing as this may seem in the eyes of western civilization, the worst of it is, so far as the amir is concerned, that the queen mother, the queen wife and all the other wives are forever interfering in politics. Their jealousies and conflicting intrigues keep the court in turmoil, and tenure of office is precarious, for Habib Ullah is not celebrated for firmness. He is good natured and prone to avoid trouble by yielding to it.

In his journey through India he has been conspicuous for his amiable qualities and those that should mark a sovereign. No end of stories are now current that tell of his unaffected dignity, courtesy, appreciation of all attentions paid to him and

**Prattle of the Youngsters**

Teacher—Johnny, can you tell me what a hypocrite is?

Johnny—Yes, ma'am. It's a boy what comes to school with a smile on his face.

Teacher (in manual training school)—What may be regarded as the forerunner of the modern automobile?

Shaggy Haired Pup—Anybody that gets in its way.

A little 3-year-old awoke one morning and gazed in wonder at the snow-covered ground, the first he had ever seen.

"Oh, Eddie!" he exclaimed, turning to his older brother, "now you'll get it; mamma will whip you for spilling all the salt outside."

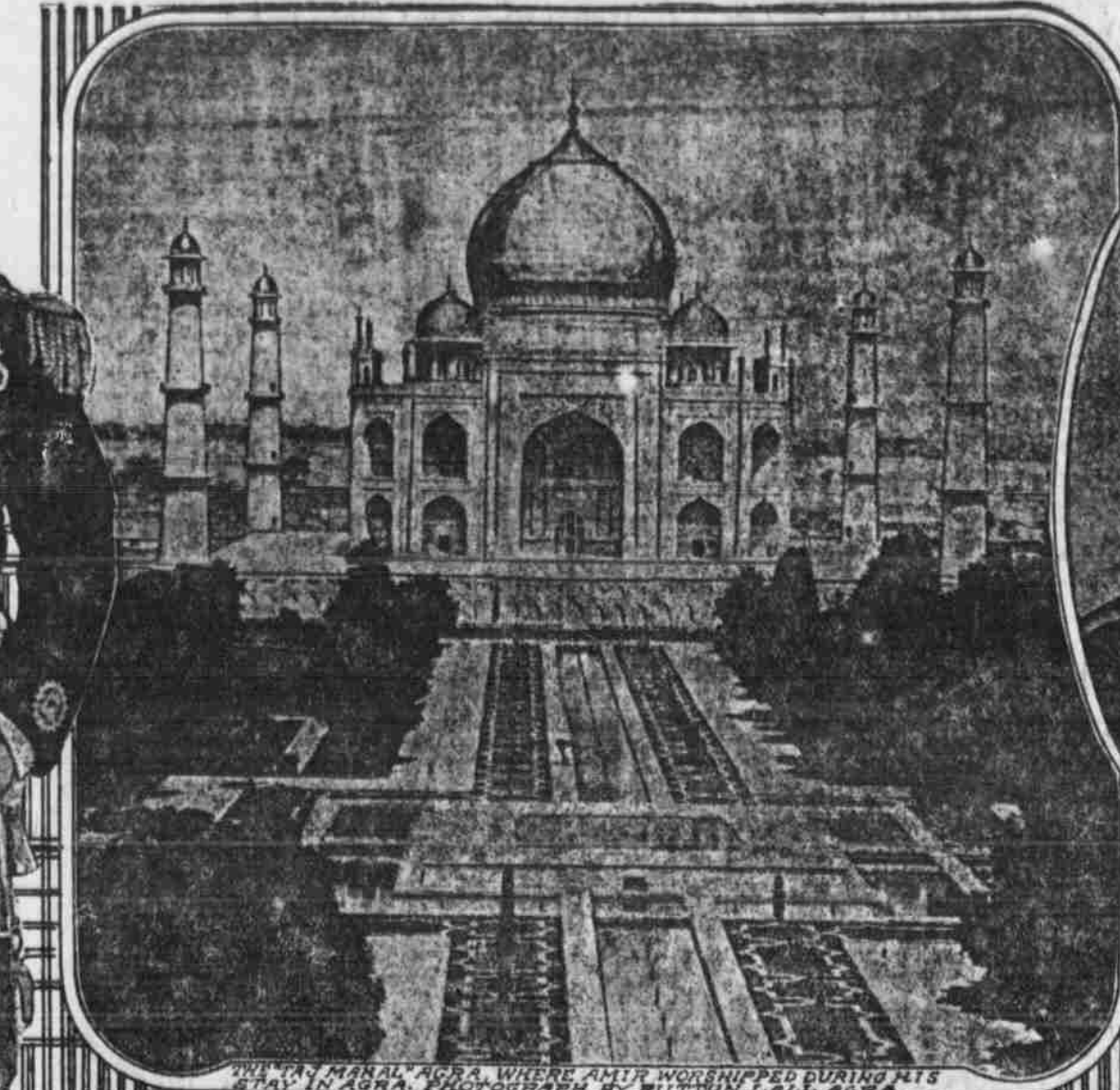
Small Tommy—Our teacher whipped a boy today for whispering, but it didn't do any good.

Mamma—Why not?

Small Tommy—Cause it made him holler ten times louder than he whispered.



"HIS MAJESTY THE AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN, G.C.B. G.C.M.G. A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN BY HIMSELF BY HISSELF."



"THE TAJ MAHAL, AGRA, WHERE THE AMIR STOPPED DURING HIS VISIT TO INDIA. PHOTOGRAPH BY RUTTON LALLU AGRA."



"HINDUS BATHING ON BANKS OF THE GANGES DURING THE ECLIPSE OF SUN ON JANUARY 1907. PHOTOGRAPH BY RUTTON LALLU AGRA."



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## One of the Richest Provinces of North Africa

(Copyright, 1907, by Frank G. Carpenter.)

**ORAN, Western Algeria, Feb. 20.**—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—I have left Morocco and am now traveling in African France. I landed at Oran three weeks ago, and have already made my way through the rich lands of the Tell, across the high plateau which are upheld between the ranges of the Atlas mountains and down into the desert of Sahara. I am now back in Oran, the chief seaport of western Algeria, and am about to start on a 250-mile railroad journey eastward to Algiers, the capital.

**African France.**

Before I begin describing my travels I want to tell you what the French have in Africa. Their possessions include more than one-third of the continent, a territory several hundred thousand miles larger than the whole United States, together with Alaska and our outlying colonies. Practically the whole of the Sahara west of the Libyan desert belongs to them, and that alone is half as big as the United States proper. They have an enormous district south of the Sahara which is known as French Central Africa, and several colonies along the Gulf of Guinea. The French Congo, which is north of the Belgian Congo, runs northward so as to take in a part of Lake Chad, and covers, all told, an area ten times as large as the state of Illinois. It is inhabited by 15,000,000 people, the most of whom are jet black negroes of the most

**Best French Colony.**

Indeed, Algeria is by far the best place of property France has outside her own boundaries. It is her great winter garden, which furnishes the chief vegetables for all the French cities and the granary which supplies a large part of her flour. Past steamed carry the garden stuff across the Mediterranean in a day and in thirty-six hours it is for sale in the Halls Central in Paris. Some of the best wines used in France are made in this country, and Algeria gives France imports to the amount of sixty odd million dollars a year. France, herself, annually sends forty or fifty million dollars' worth of her wares to Algeria and the trade between the two countries steadily grows.

Many look upon Algeria as a little strip of mountain and desert. The truth is, that part of it lying along the Mediterranean

and running back up the foot hills of the Atlas, has some of the richest soil upon earth. It is only from thirty to a hundred miles wide, but is several hundred miles long, including a territory about as large as New York and Massachusetts combined. It has more good land by far than both of those states. This land is known as the Tell. It runs clear across Algeria and on into Tunisia. It has been for centuries the granary of this part of the world. The Phoenicians and Carthaginians built empires upon it, and it was for a long time one of the principal bread baskets of imperial Rome. It was fought for by the Vandals, the Greeks and in the eighth century was conquered by the Arabs, who made the country Mohammedan, as it is today.

**Bird's-Eye View of Algeria.**

Algeria consists of these rich lands of the Tell, of the high plateaus of the Atlas just below them, and of the foothills running down to the Sahara. The country is just about as long from east to west as from Philadelphia to Cleveland, and as wide as from Washington to Boston by way of New York. It contains altogether as much land as all New England added to New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Louisiana.

It is divided into three provinces, each beginning at the Mediterranean and cutting across to the Sahara. The largest of these is at the east and is known as Constantine. It is almost as big as Minnesota and it has several hundred thousand more people. The next is Algiers, which is not far from the size of Missouri, with a population of 1,500,000, and the other is the western province of Oran, where I am writing. Oran is just about the size of Pennsylvania and its population is more than a million.

The total population of the whole country now approximates 5,000,000, and of these almost 400,000 are French. There are also several hundred thousand other Europeans, made up of Spaniards, Italians, Maltese and Jews. The rest of the Algerians are Mohammedans, Africans, and three out of every five of them is an Arab. There are also about 700,000 white Africans known as Kabyles and about 50,000 Jews.

**Negroes and Ex-Slaves.**

Here in Oran there are a large number of Spaniards and many negroes who were originally brought across the Sahara as slaves and sold in the market of Algiers. In some of the Algerian oases the people are about all negroes and I see many here in the town. The negro women often act as shamposers in the Moorish bath houses, and many of the men are beggars, who dance about singing weird songs to the clashing of queer iron cymbals. One such followed my carriage today and I made a photograph of him. His dance was a sort of a Nautch dance, consisting of a continuous contortion of the hips and a twisting of the waist.

But let me give you a picture of this

town of Oran. It is the chief seaport of western Algeria, and is the second city of the whole country in size. It contains about 150,000 people, and is more French than Algiers itself. It is situated not far from the borders of Morocco and almost directly south of Carthage in Spain. The Strait of Gibraltar is about as far away as the distance between New York and Boston, and it takes about two days to go by ship from here to Marseilles. The port has a fine harbor, consisting of a beautiful bay with a high, rugged mountain looking down upon it. East of the mountain there is a gulley or canyon with low hills extending off to the eastward, and in and on the sides of this is the town of Oran. There is some flat ground for the wharves, but back of them the buildings of the city climb the hills, in three great terraces, giving every house an outlook over the Mediterranean sea.

Down near the port are great warehouses filled with alfalfa, bags of wheat and oats, great hogheads of wine and other stuff ready for export. The wharves are piled high with such wares and immense drays, each carrying four or five tons, are hauled up and down the hills by mules. I have seen here seven huge hogheads of wine on one dray drawn by four mules hitched up tandem, and other drays carrying loads that would seem an impossibility in the United States. All traffic here goes up two wheels, and that from the load of five tons on a cart with a bed twenty feet

(Continued on Page Seven.)

Usually the average man's good judgment shows up a few minutes late.

The man who is willing to do anything is seldom without anything to do.

A man may admit that he is a fool, but it is seldom news to his acquaintances.

If a man is ignorant he may learn, but if he knows too much there is no hope for him.

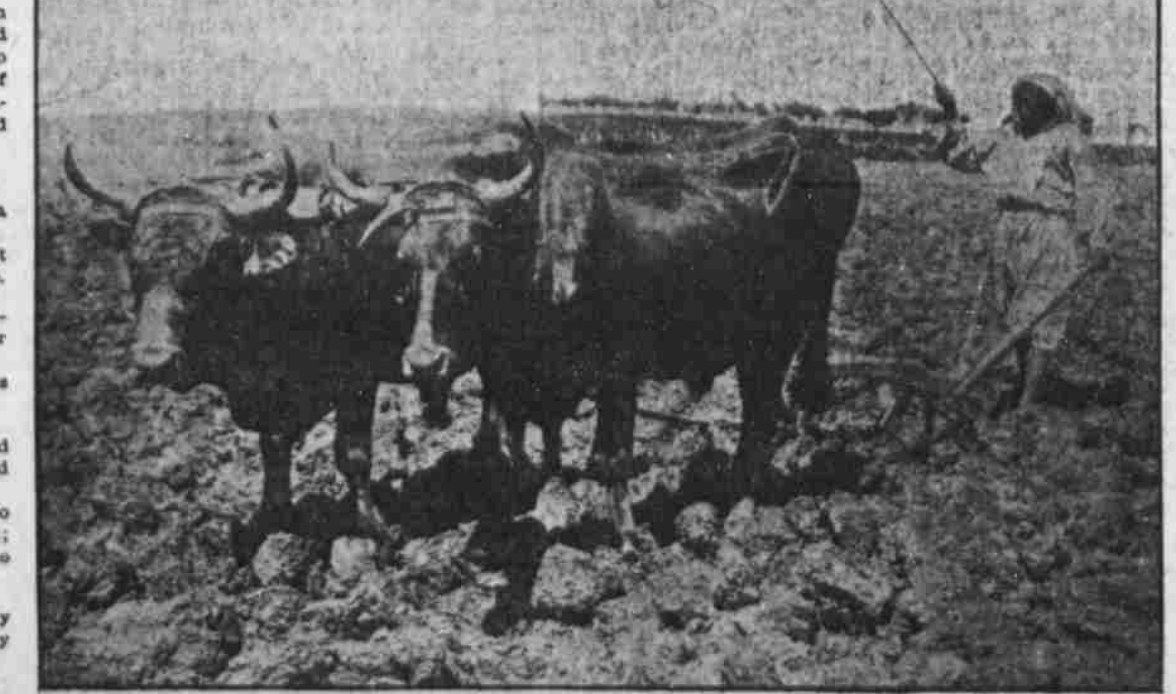
Many a promising young man has found himself posing as the defendant in a breach-of-promise suit.

According to statistics nine-tenths of the men who commit suicide are married.

Comment is unnecessary.

The average man dislikes to give up his seat in a crowded car to a woman because he is afraid she will think he is trying to flirt with her.

It's a never-failing sign that a girl is in love with a young man when she begins to want to read the letters he receives from other girls—Chicago News.



OXEN ARE USED FOR PLOWING.



TWO GENTLEMEN OF THE VILLAGE NAIGORA.